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NEWS RELEASE BY SENATOR JOHN STENNIS
CHAIRMAN, PREPAREDNESS INVESTIGATING SUBCOMMITTEE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1964

Senator John Stennis (D. Miss.), Chairman of the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Armed Services, announced today that his group would hold hearings to review the survivability, reliability, and dependability of the nation's strategic weapons and weapon delivery systems at an early date. The continuing surveillance of the ability of our major weapon systems to perform their assigned missions and their state of readiness is one of the Subcommittee's more important functions, the Senator stated.

Major hearings devoted to these subjects were held by the investigating group in both 1961 and 1962, and in 1963 many important aspects of the reliability and survivability of our nuclear weapon systems were inquired into during the Subcommittee's study of the military implications of the nuclear test ban treaty. The hearings planned for this year will enable the Subcommittee to bring its information in this important field up to date.

Senator Stennis said that the review would cover the operational capabilities of both strategic missiles and long range bombers and that, in addition, an effort would be made to obtain some information about the dependability of tactical bombers and carrier-based aircraft. He pointed out that, in assessing our ability to respond to an attack and inflict damage upon

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an aggressor, it is necessary to consider all of the weapon systems which would be employed to strike the enemy if a complete and balanced picture is to be obtained.

Stennis said the hearings now planned would follow an extensive study and investigation by the Subcommittee staff. This staff study, which is nearing completion, was announced by Stennis in early January following the request of Senator Barry Goldwater (R. Ariz.), a member of the Subcommittee, that the question of missile dependability be explored.

Members of the Subcommittee, in addition to Stennis and Goldwater, are Senators Stuart Symington (D. Mo.), Henry Jackson (D. Wash.), Strom Thurmond (D. S.C.), Leverett Saltonstall (R. Mass.), and Margaret Chase Smith (R. Me.).

Stennis stated that it was not possible to fix an exact date for the commencement of the hearings at this time.